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UNCLAS MANILA 003161

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR D, P, EAP, EAP/PMBS, EAP/PD, INR/EAP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [RP](#)

SUBJECT: ARROYO ANNOUNCES SHE HAS NO PLANS TO RESIGN

REF: A. MANILA 3154

[B](#). MANILA 3153

[C](#). MANILA 3139

[D](#). MANILA 3133

[1](#). (U) Summary: In a brief pre-recorded statement delivered July 8 on radio, President Arroyo responded to her critics and stated that she had no plans to resign. She said she plans to focus on getting the economy moving and on the delivery of social services. Her remarks will not diminish the calls for her resignation, although they may help rally her remaining troops. End Summary.

[2](#). (U) In a brief (two-three minutes) pre-recorded radio announcement that was replayed on T.V., President Arroyo rejected calls for her resignation. She said that her resignation would merely perpetuate a "broken system," adding, "The President must defend (our) hard-won democracy at all costs." Arroyo advised her opponents to pursue their grievances through legitimate channels ("take your grievances to Congress") and said she is ready to face impeachment proceedings. The President announced that she would appoint a new Cabinet in the next couple of days (she subsequently released six new appointments) and that she would focus on getting the economy moving again and providing social services. Shortly before Arroyo's announcement, former president Fidel Ramos arrived at Malacanang and held a press conference, in which he repeated his calls for a move to a parliamentary form of government. After the press conference ended, Ramos posed for photos with Arroyo, in an apparent show of support. Malacanang also announced that the President would visit Cebu the evening of July 8.

[3](#). (SBU) Comment: In her brief statement, Arroyo made clear -- while acknowledging the criticism -- that she plans to keep fighting and stay in office. It was interesting that she stressed her aim to focus on the economy and on social services, when in her July 7 address she had focused more on fundamental political reforms (ref d). Her remarks will not diminish the calls for her resignation, although they may help rally her remaining troops, who are demoralized due to the recent collapse in her support base (refs A-C).

MUSSOMELI